



## CONCUSSION INFORMATION SHEET

A concussion is a brain injury and all brain injuries are serious. They are caused by a bump, blow or jolt to the head, or by a blow to another part of the body with the force transmitted to the head. They can range from mild to severe and can disrupt the way the brain normally works. Even though most concussions are mild, all concussions are potentially serious and may result in complications including prolonged brain damage and death if not recognized and managed properly. In other words, even a "ding" or a bump on the head can be serious.

You can't see a concussion and most sports concussions occur without loss of consciousness. Signs and symptoms of concussion may show up right after the injury or can take hours or days to fully appear. If your skater reports any symptoms of concussion, or if you notice the symptoms or signs of concussion yourself, seek medical attention right away.

Symptoms may include one or more of the following:

- Headaches
- "Pressure in head"
- Nausea or vomiting
- Neck pain
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Blurred, double, or fussy vision
- Sensitivity to light or noise
- Feeling sluggish or slowed down
- Feeling foggy or groggy
- Drowsiness
- Change in sleep patterns
- "Don't feel right"
- Fatigue or low energy
- Sadness
- Nervousness or anxiety
- Irritability
- More emotional than normal
- Confusion
- Concentration or memory problems (forgetting game plays)
- Repeating the same question/comment
- Amnesia

Signs observed by teammates, parents or coaches may include:

- Appears dazed
- Vacant facial expression
- Confused about assignment
- Forgets plays
- Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
- Loses consciousness
- Shows behavior or personality changes
- Can't recall events prior to hit
- Can't recall events after hit
- Seizures or convulsions
- Moves clumsily or displays
- Answers questions slowly
- Slurred speech

This document is adapted from the CDC and the 3<sup>rd</sup> International Conference on Concussion in Sport Consensus Statement (2009). Click here to read and learn more from the "[Heads Up on Concussion in Sports Policies – Information for Parents, Coaches and School & Sports Professionals](#)" publication from the CDC.



### The following protocol will be followed to return to play following a concussion:

A skater who sustains a concussion must be free of all symptoms for 7 days before beginning the return to play protocol listed below. If the skater's symptoms last longer than 7 days, the skater should be evaluated by a physician who has experience with concussive injuries (a primary care physician or athletic trainer can help with this referral process if needed).

**Return to Play protocol:** Once the skater's symptoms have cleared and they have been without symptoms for 7 days, he or she will begin their return to play protocol. The skater must be free of symptoms during each activity to progress to the next day. For a more complex concussion (more intense symptoms and/or longer duration of symptoms) the progression may be elongated to ensure a safe return to activity.

Day 1:	Jogging, light activities (as discussed with athletic trainer)
Day 2:	Jogging, off-ice specific drills (stick handling, etc.)
Day 3:	Full Practice on-ice ( <i>non-contact – no checking</i> )
Day 4:	Full Practice on-ice ( <i>with contact - checking</i> )
Day 5:	Able to participate in a game

### What can happen if my child keeps on playing with a concussion or returns to soon?

Skaters with the signs and symptoms of concussion should be removed from play immediately. Continuing to play with the signs and symptoms of concussion leaves the young skater especially vulnerable to greater injury. There is an increased risk of significant damage from a concussion for a period of time after that concussion occurs, particularly if the skater suffers another concussion before completely recovering from the first one. This can lead to prolonged recovery, or even to severe brain swelling (second impact syndrome) with devastating and even fatal consequences.

It is well known that adolescents or teenagers will often under report symptoms of injuries, and concussions are no different. As a result, education of administrators, coaches, parents and skaters is the key for the young skater's safety.



***If you think your child has suffered a concussion:***

Any skater even suspected of suffering a concussion should be removed from the game or practice immediately. No skater may return to activity after an apparent head injury or concussion, regardless of how mild it seems or how quickly symptoms clear, without medical clearance. Close observation of the skater should continue for several hours.

Casco Bay Hockey recommends the consistent and uniform implementation of the following return to play concussion guidelines set forth by the CDC and others:

1. Any skater suspected of having sustained a concussion or other head injury during a Casco Bay athletic activity including but not limited to competition, practice or scrimmage, **must be removed from the ice/game/practice immediately.**
2. **No skater will be permitted to return to the ice/game/practice** or to participate in any other Casco Bay sponsored athletic activity **on the day of the suspected concussion.**
3. **Any skater diagnosed by a licensed health care provider as having sustained a concussion** or other head injury **shall be prohibited from further participation in Casco Bay sponsored games/practices until he/she has been evaluated and received written medical clearance** to do so from a licensed health care provider who is qualified and trained in concussion management.

You should also inform your child's coach if you think that your child may have a concussion. Remember it's better to miss one game than miss the whole season.

And **when in doubt, the skater sits out.**

For current and up-to-date information on concussions you can go to:

<http://www.cdc.gov/concussion>